

Ideas

Reading (see copies for full bibliographic details)

- [1] Descartes, from the *Third Meditation*, ¶¶5–13.
- [2] Descartes, from the *Second Replies* (AT VII 159–61).
- [3] ★ Descartes, from the *Comments on a Certain Broadsheet* (AT VIII B 358–9).
- [4] Locke, from the *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (Introduction §8, Bk II ch. 1 §§1–5)
- [5] ★ Leibniz, from the *Discourse on Metaphysics*, §§26–7.
- [6] Leibniz, from the *New Essays on Human Understanding*, Preface (extracts).

To remind you: there are three options for the coursework. (a) Complete four worksheets with succinct and satisfactory answers. (b) Choose four questions from any worksheet and answer them in a little more detail (c. 250 words). (c) Select one question from any worksheet and write an essay of c. 1000 words. Still, the reading is the basis for our discussion in class. (The questions marked with an asterisk are optional.)

1. [1] The meditator makes a difference between three kinds of ideas. What are they? (AT VII 38)
- 2.★ [1] Explain the meditator's considerations about resemblance. (AT VII 38ff.)
3. [1] [2] What is an idea for Descartes?
- 4.★ [3] Descartes argues that ideas of colours are innate. What does he mean by this? Do you agree?
5. [4] What is an idea for Locke?
- 6.★ [1] [2] [3] [4] Does Locke's view of ideas significantly differ from Descartes's?
- 7.★ [5] Leibniz suggests that the soul has no 'doors and windows'. Explain this.
8. [6] According to Leibniz, in what way are ideas innate in us?

Background. For Descartes, a *mode* of thought is a way in which the mind thinks. For instance, *remembering breakfast* is a mode of thought. Insofar as modes are modifications, we can regard them as properties or 'accidents'. Ideas have *formal* reality (they are real in the formal sense) by being modes: this is the reality they have by being things of a certain kind. Ideas also have *objective* reality in virtue of the fact that they represent objects. Reality comes in degrees. (All this will be relevant in Descartes's causal argument for God's existence.)